

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-32 are pending. Claim 2 was cancelled. Claims 9, 16-19, 23-27, and 29-32 are withdrawn from consideration in view of an election of species. Applicant requests these claims be examined upon allowance of a generic claim.

I. Claim Amendments

Claim 1 has been amended to recite the lower end of a range from Claim 5. Claim 6 has been amended to recite the lower end of a range from Claim 6. Claims 3, 20 and 22 have been amended in response to 35 USC §112 rejections.

II. 35 USC §103

A. Garber

Claims 1, 3-8, 10-15, 20, 21, 22 and 28 stand rejected as being unpatentable over US Patent Number 4,592,552 to Garber. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The rejection is actually over Garber in view of US Patent No. 5,632,691 to Hannon.

Section 3 of the Office Action asserts

"Garber failed to disclose the weight of the putter head. However, a conventional weight for a golf putter is about 320 grams [0.70 pounds] (see Hannon U.S. Patent 5,632,691) and it is very well known in the art to add more weight on any golf head by various known methods such as lead tapes, adjustable weight inserts for decades to accommodate different golfers. Therefore, it would have been a matter of design choice to add more weights to accommodate any particular golfer."

Applicant further notes Hannon, col. 2, lines 9-10 states "Conventional golf putters weigh generally between 450 and 520 grams. Of this weight, the putter head comprises between 300 and 340 grams...." (Hannon, et al, col. 32-37)

Hannon, et al. teaches adding substantial handle weight (Hannon et al, col. 5, lines 56-60) for even a conventional weight head. It is respectfully submitted that this teaches away from further increasing head weight.

Moreover, while it is possible to add a few grams by way of the methods referred to by the Office Action, amended Claim 1 recites a putter head weight of at least 18 ounces (about 510 grams). This is at least about 50 % more weight than the upper end of Hannon, et al. Amended Claim 5 recites a putter head weight of at least 24 to 80 ounces (about 680 to 2270 grams). This is at least about twice the upper end of Hannon, et al. One could not achieve this weight increase

through the means mentioned by the Office Action without completely distorting the club head and its functionality. In addition, this high amount of weight would be completely unwieldy, taken alone. No one would do it. Moreover, the inventor has told the undersigned that he has never felt a club with a head having anywhere near the weight presently claimed.

The present high weight is made wieldy by being combined with the counterweight in the grip end of the shaft and the longer, mid-shaft grip.

B. Garber and Huang

Claim 2 stands rejected as being unpatentable over Garber together with Huang (US Patent 5,671,923). Present Claims 1 and 2 have been combined. The Office Action asserts the following.

"It is noted that Garber failed to teach a counterweight positioned in the handle as set forth in claim 2. However, as stated in page 3 of the specification of the present application, Huang teaches a method of providing a counterweight in the handle to provide a more balanced golf club. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the putter of Garber with the teaching of Huang for the reason as set forth above."

Applicant does not understand this statement. Page 3 of the specification of the present application does not mention Huang. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that it is improper to combine Huang with Garber. Huang does not disclose a putter. Huang discloses a golf club for full swinging as apparent from the discussion of "shock transferred from a golf club to the golfer's body and thereby prevent the danger of injury to the golfer during a golf swing." (Huang, col 1, line 67-col. 2, line 2).

Amended Claim 1 recites providing a counterweight in the handle near the upper grip. Huang teaches away from adding a counterweight to a handle. Huang discloses his grip design is inherently lighter weight than the normal end grip, and this shifts the weight distribution of a golf club toward the club head (Huang, col. 2, lines 1-9). The weight distribution shift increases the club's swingweight to increases the club's moment of inertia. In addition, the lighter grip allows one to combine the lighter weight grip with a lighter weight club head to produce a golf club that has the same swingweight but lighter total weight.

Huang states in his summary (Huang, col. 2, lines 2-9), "Yet the golf club grip of the present invention can be made lighter than conventional grips to reduce the weight of a golf club

thereby permitting the redistribution of the weight of the golf club to the golf club head so as to increase the moment of inertia, with a resulting increase in the distance of travel of a golf ball.”

In neither Huang's summary, nor the associated detailed description, is there any reference to a counterweight. This is because Huang is trying to make the club and grip lighter to maximize club head speed when hitting a full swing shot. Huang does not disclose a putter.

In contrast, the present invention makes the club and grip heavier to maximize stability at low club head speed (*i.e.*, when putting). The putter of the present invention is a symbiotic combination of three things:

- 1) a much heavier club head, which would normally be unwieldy taken in isolation because it distributes too much of the overall weight of the club into the club head relative to the rest of the club,

- 2) a counterweight in the grip end of the shaft that, when combined with the heavier club head, returns the center of balance of the club back to its normal position, making the heavier club head feel lighter,

- 3) a longer shaft whose end rests in fixed position against the abdomen as a fulcrum (see method claim 28), with a grip part way down the shaft to which force is applied when swinging the club. This third step represents a simple type one lever, allowing more leverage for controlling the ultra-heavy putter head.

Many putters have been patented based on unique weight distributions within the club head (e.g. heel-toe weighting). The total weight of these putters is normal. But their weight distribution creates functional advantages; mainly less twisting at impact. In contrast, the present putter invention applies a superior weight and weight distribution to the total club rather than just the club head. The present putter invention uses more total weight, more weight in the club head and more weight in the handle. Furthermore, more total weight, more weight in the club head, and more weight in the grip, results in a far more stable club head at impact than any redistribution of normal weight within the club head could achieve.

Conclusion

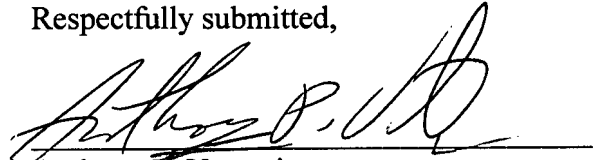
In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all objections and rejections are overcome. Hence, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:

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